



THE  
CONNOISSEUR.

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CRITIC and CENSOR-GENERAL.

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NUMBER LXXXVII.

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T H U R S D A Y, *September 25, 1755.*

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*Quid dignum tanto tibi ventre gulâque precabor?*

MART.



EATING and drinking being absolutely requisite to keep our crazy frames together, we are obliged to attend to the calls of nature, and satisfy the regular cravings of the appetite: Though it is, in truth, but a very small part of the world, that eat because they are hungry, or drink because they are dry. The common day-labourer may, indeed, be glad to snatch an hasty meal with his wife and children, that he may have strength to return to his work; and the porter finds it necessary to refresh himself with a full pot of entire butt, while he rests his load upon the bulk at the ale-house door: but those, who have more leisure to study what they shall eat and drink, require some-

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thing more in their food, than what is barely wholesome or necessary ; their palates must be gratified with rich sauces and high-seasoned delicacies ; and they frequently have recourse to whetters and provocatives, to anticipate the call of hunger, and to enable their stomachs to bear the load they lay on it. There are a sort of men, whose chief pride is a good taste (as they call it) and a great stomach : and the whole business of their lives is included in their breakfast, dinner and supper. These people, of whatever rank and denomination, whether they regale with turtle, or devour shoulders of mutton and peck-loaves for wagers, whether a duke at *White's*, or a chairman at the *Blue-Posts*, are certainly of the number of those, "whom nature, (as *Sallust* tells us,) has made like the brutes, obedient to their "bellies;" and, indeed, partake in some measure of the sentence passed on the Serpent, "to be cursed above all "cattle, and to go for ever on their bellies."

THERE are many follies and vices, which men endeavour to hide from the rest of the world : but this, above all others, they take a pride in proclaiming ; and seem to run about with the cap and bells, as if they were ambitious to be ranked among the Sons of Folly. Indeed, as the politeness of the *French* language has distinguished every glutton by the title of *Bon Vivant*, and the courtesy of our own has honoured their beastly gluttony by the name of *Good Living*, the epicure thinks to eat and drink himself into your good opinion, and recommend himself to your esteem by an exquisite bill of fare. However this may be, it is remarkable, that as the fox-hunter takes delight in relating the incidents of the chace, and kills the fox again over a bowl of punch at night, so the *Bon Vivant* enjoys giving an account of a delicious

licious dinner, and chews the cud of reflection on such exquisite entertainment.

I HAVE been led into these thoughts by an acquaintance which I have lately made with a person, whose whole conversation is, literally speaking, *Table-Talk*. His brain seems to be stuffed with an hodge-podge of ideas, consisting of several dishes, which he is perpetually serving up for the entertainment of the company. As it was said of *Longinus*, that he was a Walking Library, in the same manner I consider this gentleman as a Walking Larder: and as the orations of *Demosthenes* were said to smell of the lamp, so my friend's whole conversation favours of the kitchen. He even makes use of his stomach as an artificial memory; and recollects every place he has been at, and every person he has seen, by some circumstances relating to the entertainment he met with. If he calls to mind any inn, he adds, "for there the cook spoiled a fine turbot:" another house is recollected, "because the parson took all the fat of the haunch of venison:" he remembers a gentleman you mention, "because he had the smallest stomach he ever knew;" or one lady, "because she drank a great deal of wine at supper;" and another, "because she has the best receipt for making her pickled cucumbers look green."

HIS passion for eating also influences all his actions, diversions, and studies. He is fond of hare-hunting, as he says his pursuit is animated by the hopes of seeing puffs smoking on the table; but he wonders how any man can venture his neck in a chace after a fox, which, when it is got, is not worth eating. He has had occasion to visit the  
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several Wells in this kingdom, which he considers, not as places where persons go to drink the waters, but where they go to eat; and in this light he gives a character of them all. " *Bath*, says he, is one of the best markets in the world: " At *Tunbridge* you have fine mutton, and most exquisite " wheat-ears: But at *Cbeltenham*, pox take the place, you " have nothing but cow-beef, red veal, and white bacon." He looks upon every part of *England* in the same light; and would as soon go to *Cheshire* for butter, and *Suffolk* for cheese, as miss eating what each particular town or county is famous for having the most excellent in its kind. He does not grudge to ride twenty miles to dine on a favourite dish; and it was but last week, that he appointed a friend in *Buckinghamshire* to meet him at *Uxbridge*, " which (says " he in his letter) is the best place we can settle our business " at, on account of those excellent rolls we may have for " breakfast, and the delicious trout we are sure to have " at dinner."

MR. CRAMWELL (for that is his name) is so unfortunate as to want a purse adequate to his taste; so that he is put to several shifts, and obliged to have recourse to several artifices, to gratify his appetite. For this purpose he has with great pains constituted a Club, consisting of persons most likely to promote Good Living. This Society is composed of members, who are all of them of some trade that can furnish it with provisions, (except one country squire, who supplies it with game,) and they are obliged to send in the best of whatever their trade deals in, at prime cost: by which wise management the Club is supplied with every delicacy the seasons affords, at the most reasonable rates. Upon any vacancy much care and deliberation is used in  
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electing a new member. A candidate's being able to devour a whole turkey with an equal proportion of chine, or eat one haunch of venison with the fat of another as sauce to it, would be no recommendation: On the contrary, there was never more caution used, at the death of a Pope, to elect a successor who appears the most likely to be short-lived, than by this Society of *Epicurean* Hogs to admit nobody of a stomach superior to their own. Mr. CRAMWELL, on account of his extraordinary proficiency in the Science of Eating, is honoured with the office of Caterer; and has arrived to such a pitch of accuracy in the calculation of what is sufficient, that he seems to gage the stomachs of the Club, as an Exciseman does a cask: and when all the members are present, they seldom send away three ounces of meat from the table. A Captain of a ship trading to the *West-Indies* has been admitted an honorary member, having contracted to bring over as a present to them a sufficient cargo of turtle every voyage; and a few days ago I met CRAMWELL in prodigious high spirits, when he told me, that he was the happiest man in the world: "for now, says he, we shall have Ortolans as plenty as pidgeons; for it was but yesterday, that we balloted into our society one of the *Flanderkin-Bird-Merchants*." This association for the preservation of elegant fare gratifies my friend CRAMWELL's luxury at a cheap rate: and that he may make as many good meals as possible, he often contrives to introduce himself to the tables of persons of quality. This he effects by sending my lord or her ladyship a present of a *Bath Cheese*, a *Ruff* or *Land-Rail* from his friends in *Lincolnshire* or *Somersetshire*, which seldom fails to procure him an invitation to dinner. It once happened, that dining



with an Alderman his appetite got the better of his good-breeding, when he shaved off all the outside of a plumb-pudding; and he has ever since been talked of in the city by the name of SKIN-PUDDING.

As all his joy and misery constantly arises from his belly, he thinks it is the same with others; and I heard him ask a perfect stranger to him, who complained that he was sick, whether he had over-eat himself. It is no wonder, that CRAMWELL should be sometimes troubled with the gout: I called upon him the other morning, and found him with his legs wrapped up in flannel, and a book lying open before him upon the table. On asking him what he was reading, he told me he was *taking physic*; and on enquiring whose advice he had, "Oh, says he, nobody can do me  
" so much good as Mrs. *Hannab Glassé*. I am here going  
" through a course of her *Art of Cookery*, in hopes to get a  
" stomach: for indeed, my dear friend, (added he, with  
" tears in his eyes) my appetite is quite gone; and I am  
" sure I shall die, if I do not find something in this book,  
" which I think I can eat."

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